32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
NO6 Comanche NO6
Oklahoma

595 one wife was purchased. Sisters often trained themselves so that they could be wives of the same man, one learning to be a good horsewoman and the other to be expert in the tanning of hides and making of clothes, one complementing the other, in the hope that they might be purchased at the same time and so remain together.

If, in due time, there came to be need of a third wife, the rule was that she be young and healthy, capable of taking over the burdens of the older women. When the young wife bore a baby for the camp there was rejoicing, not only by the husband but by the other wives as well. This was especially true if it was a boy baby. (This part appealed to me. Just think of a family life where they never ran out of babies!)

595 855 I never once saw an older wife scold or mistreat the child of another wife. In fact, I never saw a Comanche woman mistreat any woman's child. It was no uncommon sight to see one wife caring for the children, while the other wife or wives were working, say, at hauling up wood for the camp.

657 [423] [417] [342] At the time when I knew them, the Comanches were still living strictly a camp life. Where it was possible, the Indian Department had fenced the family allotments all into one enclosure or pasture, using four strands of barbed wire and posts every rod. The department had also built each family a box house—in most instances measuring fourteen by twenty-eight feet, shingle-roofed, and set on a foundation of rock piers about four feet apart.

342 [592] Obviously, a family consisting of the husband, two to three wives, and several children could not live in a space that small. For spring, summer, and fall use a family would construct a brush arbor. Forked posts were cut so as to be about seven or eight feet tall when the lower end was set in the ground. Poles were laid from one fork to another, and in turn numerous cross poles were laid on them. Then a thick layer of brush with leaves was piled on the cross poles. This layer was thick enough to repel the sun's heat and shed the water from a reasonable rain. From time to time, as they were needed, additional layers of brush were applied.

This arbor served as living quarters for the family the greater part of the year. Since the sides were left open, whatever breeze there was, [352] [513] from whichever direction it came, was utilized. Platforms, placed on forked sticks and about three feet from the ground, served as beds.

252 The cooking was done on an open fire, just below the bank of a